AEC Aide Wounds 3, Kills Self

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UPTON, N.Y., Jan. 18 (UPI) A nuclear engineer, described as "a very quiet and friendly person," went berserk today at the Atomic Energy Commission's Brookhaven National Laboratory, seriously wounding three colleagues with a shotgun before committing suicide.

FBI agents and Suffolk County police were called to the laboratories. Officials identified the engineer as Michael Maresca, 34, of East Patchogue, N.Y., the father of three children. His victims were reported in fair to good condition at Brookhaven Memorial Hospital.

A spokesman for the laboratory said there appeared to be "no reason at all" for the shooting. Maresca was a veteran reactor evaluation engineer and had worked at Brookhaven since 1958.

Authorities said Maresca brought a shotgun into a large laboratory of the complex shortly before noon. Thereby violating a Brookhaven regulation. Without explanation, he blasted away at James R. Powell, a nuclear engineer, Martin S. Zucker, an associate physicist, and Leif Hjarne, a visiting assistant physicist from Sweden.

Maresca then dashed outside to his car, placed the shotgun barrel inside his mouth, and killed himself, officials said. His body was found by Brookhaven personnel and police.

No damage was reported to the valuable research equipment that fills the laboratory located at the end of a corridor leading to the offices of Maresca and other researchers.

First hit was Powell, 33, of Hampton Bays, N.Y., accosted by Maresca inside the lab and wounded by pellets in the chest and arm.

The engineer then dashed down the corridor, coming upon Zucker and Hjarne walking separately. He fired a blast at each, wounding Zucker, 35, of Mastic Beach, N.Y., in the hip and hand, and Hjarne, 29, of Port Jefferson, N.Y., in the lower back.